

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method for performing a search to identify web sites that relate to a search
2 term based on text within the web sites, the method comprising:

3 receiving at least one search term;

4 comparing the search term with electronic information within at least one electronic
5 information store to determine whether matches exist, where the electronic information
6 within the at least one electronic information store includes text displayed by different web
7 pages from different web sites; and

8 displaying results based on the matches that are determined to exist, the results
9 including at least one web site identifier.

1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein:

2 receiving at least one search term comprises receiving several search terms and
3 grouping the search terms received as a single string; and

4 comparing the search term comprises comparing the single string of search terms with
5 the electronic information within the electronic information store to determine whether
6 matches exist.

1 3. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic information within the
2 electronic information store further includes full text displayed by different web pages from
3 different web sites, such that comparing the search term comprises comparing the search
4 term with the full text displayed by different web pages from different web sites.

1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic information within the
2 electronic information store further includes titles, descriptions, and addresses of web sites
3 such that comparing the search term comprises comparing the search term with the titles, the
4 descriptions, and the addresses of web sites.

1 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the electronic information within the
2 electronic information store further includes text of introductory pages displayed by different
3 web pages from different web sites such that comparing the search term comprises

4 comparing the search term with the text of introductory pages displayed by different web
5 pages from different web sites.

1 6. The method of claim 5 wherein the text of an introductory page includes full
2 text of the introductory page such that comparing the search term comprises comparing the
3 search term with the full text of the introductory pages.

1 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the method is performed by a web host having
2 members and the method further comprises:
3 automatically scanning the text of a web site when the web site is accessed by a
4 member of the web host; and
5 storing the text of the web site that was automatically scanned for comparison against
6 search terms received.

1 8. The method of claim 7 further comprising:
2 identifying a web site being accessed by a member of the web host;
3 determining whether the text of the web site was previously stored; and
4 automatically scanning and storing include automatically scanning and storing the
5 text of a web site only when the text of the web site is determined not to have been
6 previously stored.

1 9. The method of claim 8 wherein determining whether the text of a web site has
2 been stored comprises using a web site address corresponding to the web site.

1 10. The method of claim 8 wherein determining whether the text of a web site has
2 been stored comprises:
3 scanning the text of the web site being accessed; and
4 using the scanned text of the web site to determine whether the text of the web site
5 was previously stored.

1 11. The method of claim 7 wherein the method further comprises:

2 identifying web sites provided by a listing service;
3 determining whether the text of the web sites provided by the listing service were
4 stored previously; and
5 automatically scanning and storing the text of the web sites that were determined not
6 to have been stored previously.

1 12. The method of claim 11 wherein identifying web sites provided by a listing
2 service comprises doing so periodically.

1 13. The method of claim 7 wherein automatically scanning comprises
2 automatically scanning the full text of a web site when the web site is accessed by a member
3 of the web host.

1 14. The method of claim 7 wherein automatically scanning comprises
2 automatically scanning the full text of at least a web site provided by a listing service that has
3 not been accessed by a member of the web host.

1 15. The method of claim 1 wherein the results include identifiers for several web
2 sites, and the method further comprises ranking identifiers for the several web sites based on
3 a number of matches that are determined to exist between the search term and the electronic
4 information.

1 16. The method of claim 1 wherein displaying results includes communicating
2 results based on the matches that are determined to exist, the results including at least one
3 web site identifier.

1 17. The method of claim 15 wherein the electronic information within the
2 electronic information store further includes titles, descriptions, and addresses of web sites
3 such that comparing the search term comprises comparing the search term with the titles, the
4 descriptions, and the addresses of web sites, and ranking the identifiers for the several web

5 sites is based on whether the matches occur with at least one of the text, the titles, the
6 descriptions, and the addresses of the web sites.

1 18. The method of claim 17 wherein the identifier for a web site that includes
2 matches that occur with more than one of the text, the titles, the descriptions, and the
3 addresses of the web site is ranked higher than the identifier for a web site that includes
4 matches that occur with only one of the text, the titles, the descriptions, and the addresses of
5 the web site.

1 19. The method of claim 15 wherein the identifier for a web site that includes
2 matches that occur with more than one of the text, the titles, the descriptions, and the
3 addresses is ranked higher than the identifier for a web site that includes matches that occur
4 with only one of the text, the titles, the descriptions, and the addresses.

1 20. The method of claim 17 wherein the identifier for a web site that includes
2 matches that occur with the titles is ranked higher than the identifier for a web site that
3 includes matches that occur with the descriptions, the addresses, and the text of the web sites.

1 21. The method of claim 20 wherein the identifier for a web site that includes
2 matches that occur with the descriptions is ranked higher than the identifier for a web site
3 that includes matches that occur with the addresses and the text of the web site.

1 22. The method of claim 21 wherein the identifier for a web site that includes
2 matches that occur with the addresses is ranked higher than the identifier for a web site that
3 includes matches that occur with the text of the web site.

1 23. The method of claim 22 wherein the text includes a symbol other than an
2 alphanumeric symbol.

1 24. A method for performing a search to identify web sites that relate to a search
2 term, the method comprising:

3 receiving at least one search term;
4 comparing the search term with a list of recommended web sites to determine
5 whether matches exist;
6 comparing the search term with previously performed searches to determine whether
7 matches exist;
8 comparing the search term with electronic information within at least one electronic
9 information store to determine whether matches exist, wherein the electronic information
10 within the at least one electronic information store includes text displayed by different web
11 pages from different web sites; and
12 displaying results based on the matches that are determined to exist.

1 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the electronic information within the
2 electronic information store includes full text displayed by different web pages from different
3 web sites.

1 26. A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium for performing a
2 search to identify web sites that relate to a search term based on text within the web sites,
3 comprising instructions for:

4 receiving at least one search term;
5 comparing the search term with electronic information within at least one electronic
6 information store to determine whether matches exist, wherein the electronic information
7 within the at least one electronic information store includes text displayed by different web
8 pages from different web sites; and
9 displaying results based on the matches that are determined to exist, the results
10 including at least one web site identifier.

1 27. The computer program of claim 26 wherein the computer readable medium
2 comprises a propagated signal.

1 28. The computer program of claim 27 wherein the propagated signal comprises a
2 carrier wave.

1 29. The computer program of claim 26 wherein the electronic information within
2 the electronic information store further includes full text displayed by different web pages
3 from different web sites, and the instructions for comparing the search term comprise
4 instructions for comparing the search term with the full text displayed by different web pages
5 from different web sites.

1 30. The computer program of claim 26 wherein the electronic information within
2 the electronic information store further includes text of introductory pages displayed by
3 different web pages from different web sites, and the instructions for comparing the search
4 term comprise instructions for comparing the search term with the text of the introductory
5 pages displayed by different web pages from different web sites.

1 31. The computer program of claim 30 wherein the text of an introductory page
2 includes full text of the introductory page and the instructions for comparing comprise
3 instructions for comparing the search item with the full text of the introductory page.

1 32. A method for populating at least one memory store, wherein the method is
2 performed by a web host having members, the method comprising:
3 automatically scanning text of a web site when the web site is accessed by a member
4 of the web host; and
5 storing the text of the web site that was automatically scanned for comparison against
6 search terms that are received.

1 33. The method of claim 32 further comprising:
2 identifying the web site being accessed by a member of the web host; and
3 determining whether the text of the web site was previously stored;
4 wherein the automatically scanning and storing include automatically scanning and
5 storing the text of a web site only when the text of the web site is determined not to have
6 been previously stored.

1 34. The method of claim 33 wherein determining whether the text of a web site
2 has been stored comprises using a web site address corresponding to the web site.

1 35. The method of claim 33 wherein determining whether the text of a web site
2 has been stored comprises:

3 scanning the text of the web site being accessed; and
4 determining based on the text of the web site whether the text of the web site was
5 previously stored.

1 36. The method of claim 33 wherein the text of the web site previously stored are
2 related to the text of the web sites previously accessed by members of the web host.

1 37. The method of claim 32 comprising:
2 identifying web sites provided by a listing service;
3 determining whether the text of the web sites provided by the listing service were
4 stored previously; and
5 automatically scanning and storing the text of the web sites that were determined not
6 to have been stored previously.

1 38. The method of claim 37 wherein identifying web sites provided by a listing
2 service comprises doing so periodically.

1 39. The method of claim 32 wherein automatically scanning text comprises
2 automatically scanning the full text of a web site when the web site is accessed by a member
3 of the web host.

1 40. The method of claim 32 wherein automatically scanning text comprises
2 automatically scanning the full text of at least a web site provided by a listing service that has
3 not been accessed by a member of the web host.

1 41. A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium for populating at
2 least one memory store, comprising instructions for:
3 automatically scanning text of a web site when the web site is accessed by a member
4 of a web host; and
5 storing text of the web site that was automatically scanned for comparison against
6 search terms that are received.

1 42. The computer program of claim 41 wherein the computer readable medium
2 comprises a propagated signal.

1 43. The computer program of claim 42 wherein the propagated signal comprises a
2 carrier wave.

1 44. A system for storing searchable content, the system comprising:
2 a first electronic region that includes text displayed by different web pages from
3 different web sites is populated by automatically scanning and storing the text of a web site
4 when the web site is accessed a threshold number of times by members of a web host; and
5 a second electronic region that includes text displayed by different web pages from
6 different web sites and is populated by automatically scanning and storing the text of a web
7 site provided by a listing service that was not accessed the threshold number of times by
8 members of the web host.

1 45. The system of claim 44 wherein the first electronic region and the second
2 electronic region further include full text displayed by different web pages from different
3 web sites.

1 46. The system of claim 44 wherein the first electronic region and the second
2 electronic region further include titles, descriptions, and addresses displayed by different web
3 pages from different web sites.

1 47. The system of claim 44 wherein the text includes a symbol other than an
2 alphanumeric symbol.